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ABSTRACT

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) report, "How Schools Shortchange Girls," presents compelling evidence that girls are not receiving the same quality or even quantity of education as boys. The AAUW report is a synthesis of all the available research on the subject of girls in schools. It presents the rationale for a new and enlightened education policy to ensure that all children in the United States receive the very best schooling possible. Built around the recommendations from the AAUW report, this action guide provides community leaders with strategies for developing solutions to end gender bias in the classroom. Several propositions that address aspects of gender equity in schools are put forth, and with each a number of action strategies for achieving the proposition are suggested along with a listing of AAUW and additional resources. A complete list of AAUW and additional resources also is included. (DB)

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THE AAUW REPORT

How Schools Shortchange Girls

ACTION GUIDE

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STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING GENDER EQUITY IN SCHOOLS

THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades a variety of programs have aimed at making education equitable for all students—but, as *The AAUW Report: How Schools Shortchange Girls* documents, we still have a long way to go. Thanks to the conscientious work of equity experts, advocates, educators, and community leaders, strides toward equity have been made, yet many challenges remain.

The AAUW Report presents compelling evidence that girls are not receiving the same quality or even quantity of education as boys. The message is familiar, but never before has the supporting data been presented in one document.

Commissioned by the American Association of University Women Educational Foundation and researched by the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, *The AAUW Report* is a synthesis of all the available research on the subject of girls in school. It presents a base for a new and enlightened education policy to ensure that all children in this country receive the very best schooling possible.

AAUW has an impressive history of national and local activism on the pressing social issues that affect the lives of women and girls. Chief among these issues is education, the cornerstone of AAUW's existence. More than a century ago, Marion Talbot gathered a group of educated women whose shared mission was to help women gain access to higher education. Since that day, the American Association of University Women has advocated quality education and equality for all.

Now we reach out to America's girls, the leaders of tomorrow, to help them succeed. Creating better futures for them means investing in the present—and that means taking action in your community.

The need for gender equity in America's classrooms is undeniable, and the time to address this need is now, while education reform is a national priority. AAUW is taking the lead to ensure that girls will not continue to be shortchanged in school.

Built around the recommendations from *The AAUW Report*, the *Action Guide* provides community leaders with strategies for developing solutions to end gender bias in the classroom. Created as a companion document to *The AAUW Report*, the *Action Guide* will strengthen your ability to be a catalyst for change for girls in your local schools.

Gather the key players in your community to discuss short- and long-range goals for equity. Center your discussions on overall change, not band-aid approaches to the problem. Focus your attention where you can be most effective. Resources to help you in your efforts are listed at the end of each action strategy section; complete information on these resources begins on page 6.

The AAUW Educational Foundation proudly presents this *Action Guide*, made possible through the generosity of the many supporters of our Eleanor Roosevelt Fund and inspired by the long history of successful member-initiated projects for girls. Systemic change is our goal. By taking action for girls today, we will make tomorrow's world a better place for everyone.

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Teachers, administrators, and counselors must be prepared and encouraged to bring gender awareness and gender equity to every aspect of schooling.

Action Strategies

♦ Raise the awareness of school boards, superintendents, and professors in schools of education about the positive results of equity training for teachers, counselors, and administrators. Use *The AAUW Report* to solidify your discussion points.

♦ Provide copies of *The AAUW Report* to deans, department chairs, and professors in schools of education. Encourage professors of teacher training courses to develop gender-fair multicultural curricula.

♦ Take equity materials to school board meetings and solicit support for equity training. Encourage administrators to offer release time, sabbaticals, and funding for teachers to attend seminars, workshops, or take graduate courses in gender-fair and multicultural education. Encourage teachers to apply for grants or fellowships, such as Eleanor Roosevelt Teacher Fellowships, to pursue their studies.

♦ Encourage administrators to schedule in-service days to examine gender issues in the classroom and the school. These sessions should be followed by discussion and in-depth reflection on gender issues to develop constructive classroom strategies for gender equity.

♦ Encourage teacher-conducted research and peer review to examine teacher/student interaction. Provide teachers with tools for assessing themselves in the classroom. Use the results of these observations to suggest alternative teaching methods.

♦ Offer to lead discussion groups based on the policy recommendations of *The AAUW Report* for teachers, curriculum specialists, counselors, and administrators. Encourage ongoing dialogue by forming discussion groups or task forces. Use examples of programs that bring about change.

♦ Encourage all of these individuals to join AAUW to expand our influence on gender equity issues and education policy.

AAUW Resources

The AAUW Report: How Schools Shortchange Girls

Eleanor Roosevelt Teacher Fellowships

Gender Equity Assessment Guide, *Initiative* Packet #1

"Equitable Treatment of Boys and Girls in the Classroom," AAUW Issue Brief

"Stalled Agenda: Gender Equity and the Training of Educators," AAUW Issue Brief

Additional Resources

Gender/Ethnic Expectations and Student Achievement (GESA)

Promoting Self-Esteem in Young Women: A Manual for Teachers, University of the State of New York

Resources for Educational Equity, Women's Educational Equity Act Publishing Center

Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity Project (SEED), Wellesley College Center for Research on Women

Solutions that Work, National Education Association

Girls and women must play a central role in educational reform. The experiences, strengths, and needs of girls from every race and social class must be considered to provide excellence and equity for all our nation's students.

Action Strategies

♦ Encourage women candidates to run for positions that influence education policy: local school board and the state superintendent of public instruction, for example. Meet with women who hold education policymaking positions, such as members of education committees in the state legislature, to inform them about educational equity issues. Develop a list of local women with expertise in education issues for your

governor, mayor, and other officials to use in considering appointees to education posts.

♦ Research your local school district's policymaking processes. What procedures are used to make decisions about textbooks and curricula, school restructuring, and professional development programs? What role do classroom teachers play in those efforts? If teachers are not already involved in that work, encourage school officials to change their policies to mandate teacher involvement. Stress the importance of ensuring that women, who are the majority of K-12 teachers, are leaders in the process.

♦ Help teachers interested in moving into administrative positions gain the necessary skills/training. Present educational equity information to the school board and other officials, discuss the importance of increasing the number of women in education administration, and encourage a commitment to providing professional development opportunities in this area for teachers. Help the school district identify funding sources to support in-service programs and release time for teachers to do advanced study. Potential funders include local foundations, businesses, and the AAUW Educational Foundation.

♦ Gather information about state and local legislation that supports professional development activities for teachers and administrators. Is increasing the number of women and persons of color in administrative positions a focus of those efforts? Is receipt of funding tied to a commitment to involve groups that are underrepresented in administrative positions? Is gender fairness a component of all training funded through the legislation? If the answer to any or all of these questions is no, work to change the legislative requirements. Refer to "The Branch *Initiative*: A Workbook for Action" for more specific guidelines.

♦ Ensure that policymakers at the state and local level are informed about girls' educational needs. Provide copies of *The AAUW Report* and/or *Summary* and the summary of AAUW's "Shortchanging Girls, Shortchanging America" survey on girls and self-esteem to school officials. Meet with administrators and school board members to discuss AAUW's research and its implications for school policies. Make presentations on gender equity issues, using the "Shortchanging Girls, Shortchanging America" video, discussion guide, and sample speech as resources.

♦ Become involved in citizen committees, school board sessions, town meetings, and other opportunities to influence school reform plans. Analyze the likely impact of reform proposals on female students so you can be an advocate for proposals that will benefit girls as well as boys. When the school board, state and local education bodies, and funding agencies are addressing issues you have identified as critically important for girls, let them know your branch's views and recommendations on those issues.

AAUW Resources

"Restructuring Education: Getting Girls into America's Goals," AAUW Issue Brief

Gender Equity Assessment Guide, *Initiative* Packet #1

"Shortchanging Girls, Shortchanging America" video

"The Branch *Initiative*: A Workbook for Action"

Additional Resource

Sex Equity Handbook for Schools, by Myra and David Sadker

The formal school curriculum must include the experiences of women and men from all walks of life. Girls and boys must see themselves reflected and valued in the materials they study.

Action Strategies

♦ Use the "Gender Equity Assessment Guide" as a tool to review curricula and textbooks used throughout the school district in terms of gender fairness and multiculturalism. Report your findings to the school board and be prepared to make recommendations for change based on model programs and textbooks.

♦ Get involved in your school district's textbook selection and curriculum development processes. Join

your school's advisory board to ensure that your school's curriculum includes gender-fair multicultural messages. Be sure that the curriculum also includes sequential instruction in health, mental health, and sex education issues.

♦ Survey the types of books available in school and local libraries. Ensure that children of all ages and their parents have access to gender-fair multicultural materials by suggesting books/materials to the librarians. Provide an up-to-date list of resources that promote gender fairness and multiculturalism to teachers, administrators, counselors, and librarians on a regular basis.

♦ In conversations with teachers, administrators, counselors, school board members, and local officials, stress that a gender-fair multicultural curriculum should not be an add-on to the current curriculum but should be an integral part of the whole approach to learning.

AAUW Resources

Gender Equity Assessment Guide, *Initiative* Packet #1

Leader in Action, Spring 1991, Texas AAUW, pg. 20

Additional Resources

Choices Curriculum, The Advocacy Press

The National Coalition for Sex Equity in Education

Desegregation Assistance Centers

The Network, Inc.

The National Women's History Project

Girls must be educated and encouraged to understand that mathematics and the sciences are important and relevant to their lives. Girls must be actively supported in pursuing education and employment in these areas.

Action Strategies

♦ Sponsor math and science institutes, workshops, or camps for young girls while showcasing women role models in scientific and technological fields. Give young girls concrete examples of potential career options through site visits and career information workshops.

♦ Get involved in your local school and encourage administrators to create links with youth-serving organizations that have developed successful out-of-school programs for girls in math and science. Act as a liaison between your school and local youth-serving organization and institutionalize the partnership through joint activities.

♦ Encourage teachers to affirmatively involve girls in learning math and science. Contact your school board and encourage the establishment of staff development programs that deal with teacher expectation and its effect on self-esteem and girls' participation in "nontraditional" fields such as math and science. Cite *The AAUW Report: How Schools Shortchange Girls* as support for your efforts.

♦ Get local business involved with schools. Ask businesses to provide role models to help dispel the myths that some fields are "inappropriate" for women. Ask them to provide funding for equipment for hands-on activities in the classroom. Encourage their sponsorship of field trips to science museums and site visits to science- and technology-related businesses.

AAUW Resources

Leader in Action, Fall 1990, Ohio AAUW, pg. 17

Leader in Action, Fall 1991, Denmark (SC) Branch, pg. 19

Additional Resources

Expanding Your Horizons, Math/Science Network

Operation SMART, Girls Inc.

"Leading Girls to Mathematics, Science and Technology," Contemporary Issues Series, Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.

EQUALS Program, University of California-Berkeley

Activities that Integrate Math and Science (AIMS)

American Association for the Advancement of Science

Summermath for Teachers, Mt. Holyoke College

Volunteer Education and Development, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America

A critical goal of education reform must be to enable students to deal effectively with the realities of their lives, particularly in areas such as sexuality and health.

Action Strategies

♦ Identify individuals and groups within your community who represent the diversity of students attending your local schools. With your community partners, offer to work with school personnel to use AAUW's "Gender Equity Assessment Guide" to develop a picture of the status of girls in the school system. Stress the importance of having a picture of the educational status of *all* students before designing and implementing school reform initiatives.

♦ Meet with school officials to discuss collaborative efforts among social services, youth-serving organizations, and medical facilities. Does the school offer classes in decision-making skills? If not, encourage this by explaining the benefits of such a course. Encourage school links to community clinics. Be certain that information is available to students about services provided by community clinics and groups.

♦ Be an advocate for comprehensive sex education in K-12. Contact your local PTA, school board, and/or state education department and let them know that sex education must be an integral part of the educational experience. Encourage your network to offer classes to students that emphasize decision-making skills.

♦ Insist that schools establish and enforce policies and procedures dealing with sexual harassment, including student-to-student harassment. Encourage the school board to provide awareness training for teachers, counselors, administrators, and male students on sexual harassment. Help school boards develop and enforce a clear policy. Make certain male students understand that harassment of girls is unacceptable. Be sure girls know how to report incidents of harassment.

♦ Assess the enforcement of Title IX in your schools. Pay close attention to the policies and procedures that may adversely affect pregnant and parenting students. Are there school completion programs for teenage mothers? Does the school provide information on prenatal care for pregnant teens? Is there an attendance policy that punishes these teens? Does the school provide child care services for young mothers?

AAUW Resources

Leader in Action, Summer 1988, "Early Equity and Family Life Education," pg. 7

Gender Equity Assessment Guide, *Initiative* Packet #1

Additional Resources

Title IX: A Practical Guide to Achieving Sex Equity in Education, National Coalition for Women and Girls in Education

Sex Education and Sex Stereotypes: Theory and Practice, working paper no. 198, Wellesley College Center for Research on Women

RESOURCES

Below is a complete listing of the resources noted in this guide. Although this list certainly does not contain every resource available, it does include key AAUW resources as well as a sampling of resources from other groups.

AAUW Resources

Unless otherwise noted, contact the AAUW Sales Office to order these valuable resources: P.O. Box 251, Annapolis Junction, MD 20701-0251; 800/225-9998, ext. 91. Unless noted, a shipping and handling charge will be added to each order.

The AAUW Report: How Schools Shortchange Girls is a startling examination of how girls are disadvantaged in America's schools, pre-school through grade 12. Prepared by the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women for the AAUW Educational Foundation, the book includes recommendations for educators and policymakers, as well as concrete strategies for change. 128 pages/1992. $14.95 AAUW members/$16.95 nonmembers. Bulk prices available.

The AAUW Report Executive Summary is an overview of *The AAUW Report* research, plus recommendations for educators and policymakers. 8 pages/1992. $6.95 AAUW members/$8.95 nonmembers. Bulk prices available.

AAUW Issue Briefs—"Equitable Treatment of Girls and Boys in the Classroom," "Restructuring Education: Getting Girls Into America's Goals," and "Stalled Agenda: Gender Equity and the Training of Educators"—offer background information and resources on critical gender equity issues in education. (Included in *Initiative for Educational Equity* packet sent in August 1991 Branch Presidents and State Leaders mailing; $1 per copy/$7 minimum order; package of 3 briefs/$4.95 members/$6.95 nonmembers.)

Executive Summary: Shortchanging Girls, Shortchanging America is a 17-page summary of AAUW's national poll. (Sent to AAUW branch and state presidents in January 1991; $5 includes shipping and handling.)

A Call to Action: Shortchanging Girls, Shortchanging America is a powerful synopsis of the AAUW poll and January 1991 national roundtable attended by leaders in government, education, and industry—with action ideas for community change. 40 pages/1991. $12.95 AAUW members/$14.95 nonmembers.

Video: Shortchanging Girls, Shortchanging America includes highlights from the AAUW poll, interviews with education experts, and comments from public policy leaders. (Sent to AAUW branch and state presidents in August 1991; $19.95 members/$24.95 nonmembers.)

The **"Video Discussion Guide"** and **"Sample Speech"** were developed for use with the "Shortchanging Girls, Shortchanging America" video. (Sent in August 1991 Branch Presidents and State Leaders mailing; contact the AAUW Program & Policy department, 202/785-7761, for single copies.)

The **"Gender Equity Assessment Guide"** is a tool for developing a picture of the status of girls in a school or school system. (Included in the *Initiative for Educational Equity* packet, in the August 1991 Branch Presidents and State Leaders mailing. Contact the AAUW Program & Policy department, 202/785-7761, for a single packet.) The Action Focus of the Fall 1991 *Leader in Action* and "The Branch *Initiative*: A Workbook for Action" include suggestions for using the "Assessment Guide."

"Our Rights...Nothing Less: The AAUW Elections Manual" is a how-to guide to voter and candidate education. (Sent in November 1991 Branch Presidents and State Leaders mailing; $4.50 members/$6.00 nonmembers.)

"Making a Difference: Your Branch Can Utilize

Campaign '92 to Advance AAUW Issues," the Action Focus section in the Winter 1992 *Leader in Action*, provides election strategies. (Branch and state leaders receive; annual subscription: $15 members/$20 nonmembers.)

"The Branch *Initiative*: A Workbook for Action" includes a checklist for assessing state legislation related to gender equity issues in education and community action ideas. (Sent in March 1992 Branch Presidents and State Leaders mailing.)

Leader in Action. Leadership publication sent to AAUW branch, state, and Association officers three times a year. Includes articles with program information, leadership strategies, and replicable branch project models. $15 AAUW members/$20 nonmembers.

AAUW Outlook. Sent to all members. Addresses issues of concern to educated women; includes Association, Educational Foundation, and Legal Advocacy Fund activities. Nonmember subscription: $15.

Action Alert. AAUW's monthly public policy newsletter. $20 AAUW members/$25 nonmembers.

Research & Projects Community Action Grants provide seed money to AAUW branches, states, and individual women for projects or nondegree research that promotes education and equity for women and girls. Call the AAUW Educational Foundation for an application, 202/728-7602.

Additional Resources

Activities that Integrate Math and Science (AIMS) provides training in science and mathematics to teachers in grades K-9, using the integrated math/science approach. Teachers can also learn to become trainers in their own school districts. Contact AIMS Education Foundation, P.O. Box 8120, Fresno, CA 93747; 209/255-4094.

American Association for the Advancement of Science provides materials on girls and minorities in science. For a complete list of resources, contact AAAS Directorate for Education and Human Resources Programs, 1333 H St. N.W., Washington, DC 20005-4792.

Choices Curriculum is a series of programs and materials that give young women a realistic overview of life opportunities. Available through Advocacy Press, a national non-profit educational and publishing arm of the Girls Club of Greater Santa Barbara. Contact Advocacy Press, P.O. Box 236, Dept. A, Santa Barbara, CA 93102.

Desegregation Assistance Centers offer training and materials on race, gender, and national origin. There are 10 federally funded centers nationwide. Contact Susan Shaffer, Director, Mid-Atlantic Equity Center, American University, 5010 Wisconsin Ave. N.W., Washington, DC 20016; 202/885-8536.

"Education for All: Women and Girls Speak Out on the National Education Goals" is a useful model for analyzing the impact of school reform proposals on female students. Offered by the National Coalition of Women and Girls in Education, c/o AAUW Program & Policy Department, 1111 Sixteenth St. N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

EQUALS provides educator training seminars on encouraging participation and achievement of women and minority students in mathematics. Contact EQUALS, Lawrence Hall of Science, University of California-Berkeley, Berkeley, CA 94720; 510/642-1823.

Expanding Your Horizons conferences have been held nationwide for young women in middle and high school to explore opportunities in science through role models and hands-on activities. Contact Joy Wallace, Math/Science Network, 2727 College Ave., Berkeley, CA 94705; 415/841-MATH.

Gender/Ethnic Expectations and Student Achievement (GESA) provides training, peer evaluation, and observation of classroom dynamics. Contact GrayMill Consulting, 2029 352 Pl., Earlham, IA 50072; 515/834-2431.

"Leading Girls to Mathematics, Science and Technology," Contemporary Issues: Into the World of Today and Tomorrow is a how-to manual for troop leaders that includes tips, activities, and resources. Contact Sharon Hussey, Girl Scouts of the U.S.A., 830 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022.

The National Coalition for Sex Equity in Education provides leadership in the identification and infusion of sex equity in all educational programs and processes and within parallel equity concerns, including, but not limited to, age, disability, national origin, race, religion, and sexual orientation. Contact Barbara Eisenbarth, NCSEE Chair, Idaho Department of Education, 650 West State St., Boise, ID 83720; 208/334-2186.

The National Women's History Project serves as a clearinghouse for information, books, posters, and other classroom resources on women in U.S. history. They also

develop curriculum materials and conduct teacher training workshops on integrating women into K-12 curriculum. Contact NWHP, 7738 Bell Rd., Windsor, CA 95492; 707/838-6000.

The Network, Inc., is a non-profit education consulting organization that offers training in organizational change, school improvement and equity. Contact Raymond Rose, 300 Brickstone Square, Suite 900, Andover, MA 01810; 508/470-1080.

Operation SMART offers a series of activities for girls in science, math, and relevant technology. Teachers and group leaders can receive training on how to set up a program. Contact Libby Palmer, Director, Girls Inc., 30 East 33 St., New York, NY 10016; 212/689-3700.

Promoting Self-Esteem in Young Women: A Manual for Teachers, single copies free from the University of the State of New York, State Education Department, Division of Civil Rights and Intercultural Relations, Albany, NY 12203.

Resources for Educational Equity, 1988, free from the Women's Educational Equity Act Publishing Center, Educational Development Center, 55 Chapel St., Suite 200, Newton, MA 02160; 800/225-3088.

Myra and David Sadker conduct workshops on correcting gender inequity for educators and community and business groups. Contact Myra and David Sadker, School of Education, American University, Washington, DC 20016.

Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity (SEED) provides funds on a matching-grant basis to local school districts for training teachers to conduct ongoing faculty reading groups related to gender and multicultural equity. Contact National SEED Project, Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, Wellesley, MA 02181; 617/431-1453.

Solutions that Work: Identification and Elimination of Barriers to the Participation of Female and Minority Students in Academic Educational Programs, a resource directory, is available from the National Education Association, 1201 Sixteenth St. N.W., Washington, DC 20036; 202/822-7200.

Summermath for Teachers is a two-week residential program designed to update math teachers on new research on math learning and cognitive development as it relates to teaching mathematics. Contact Deborah Schifter, Director, Mt. Holyoke College, 302 Shatluck, South Hadley, MA 01065; 413/538-2063.

Title IX: A Practical Guide to Achieving Sex Equity in Education is offered by the National Coalition for Women and Girls in Education, c/o AAUW Program & Policy Dept., 1111 Sixteenth St. N.W., Washington, DC 20036; $3.00 per copy.

Volunteer Education and Development, 1992, a volunteer training curricula for adults working in a one-to-one relationship with children and youth; includes modules on gender issues, diversity, and self-esteem. Contact Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America, 230 North 13th St., Philadelphia, PA 19107; 215/567-7000.

Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, Wellesley, MA 02181-8259; 617/235-0320, ext. 2500.

The American Association of University Women, representing 135,000 college graduates, has promoted education and equity for women and girls for more than a century. In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability. For membership information, write AAUW Membership Development, Dept. T, 1111 Sixteenth Street N.W., Washington, DC 20036-4873, or call us at 202/785-7759, ext. 2.

The AAUW Educational Foundation provides funds to advance education, research, and self-development for women, and to foster equity and positive societal change. The AAUW Report Action Guide was made possible by charitable contributions. Please consider making a tax-deductible gift to the AAUW Education Foundation to further this important work. Send your check to: AAUW Educational Foundation, Dept. T, 1111 Sixteenth Street N.W., Washington, DC 20036-4873.

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